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VETERINARIAN'S REPORT

chief provincial

Spring 2005: Volume 3, Number 1

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AL-1836

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BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY (BSE)

Latest BSE Cases

- Two cases of BSE were confirmed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) early in 2005. The first, on January 2, 2005, was detected in an eight-year-old downer (unable to stand) dairy cow. The second case, confirmed on January 11, 2005, occurred in a six-year-old downer beef cow. The affected animals, both born and raised in Alberta, were detected through the Canada-Alberta BSE Surveillance Program.
- The CFIA investigation of the January 2nd case confirmed that the infected cow had been exposed early in its life to feed rations containing meat and bone meal (MBM) manufactured prior to 1997. Feed containing MBM was banned in 1997. CFIA identified 141 trace out animals. Nine birth cohorts were still alive and located, depopulated and tested negative for BSE. The CFIA concluded their investigation of this case on January 21, 2005.
- The CFIA continues to investigate the feed sources (feed retailers and manufacturers) of the January 11th case, because the cow was born after the 1997 feed ban was implemented. The CFIA identified 349 birth cohorts, 41 of which were still alive. They were located and depopulated. All tested negative for BSE. Additional trace outs are underway.
- The CFIA is reviewing the implementation of Canada's feed ban and it has invited international animal health and feed experts to participate.
- For up-to-date information about these cases, please see the Chief Provincial Veterinarian (CPV) website at: <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/chiefvet> or the CFIA BSE website at: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anim/a/heasan/disemala/bseesb/bseesbindexe.shtml>

Alberta's BSE Surveillance Results

- Since September 10, 2004, Alberta has participated in the Canada-Alberta BSE Surveillance Program (CABSESP). The program was designed to increase the number of samples received from high-risk animals for BSE testing.
- From 1996 to August 2004, Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development (AAFRD) tested approximately 3,000 animals for BSE. Under the CABSESP, AAFRD tested 6,626 cattle in its Edmonton lab from September 10, 2004 to December 31, 2004 and 2,059 in 2005, as of January 29, 2005. Alberta has tested 14,195 high-risk cattle between September 10, 2004 and January 29, 2005. Alberta surpassed its 2004 target of 2,780 animals in November 2004 and is well on its way to achieving its 2005 goal of 10,425.
- Weekly and cumulative BSE testing totals are displayed on the CPV website at: <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/chiefvet>

WEST NILE VIRUS (WNV)

- The following table summarizes West Nile Virus (WNV) activity in Alberta horses in 2003 and 2004:

Year	Confirmed Positive	Number Dead	Per Cent Dead of Confirmed Positive Cases
2003	170	59	34.7
2004	4	1	25.0

- The complete summaries WNV in horses for 2003 and 2004 are available on the CPV website at: <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/chiefvet>
- Surveillance of horses for WNV will continue for 2005.

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- WNV in horses is a reportable disease in Alberta. This means anyone knowing of, or suspecting a case of WNV in horses, must report it to the Chief Provincial Veterinarian at (780) 427-3448.
- Vaccines against WNV are licensed in Canada for use in horses and are available from veterinarians.
- More information about WNV is available at: [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/cpv4377?opendocument](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/cpv4377?opendocument)

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD)

- AAFRD continues to conduct testing for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in farmed and wild cervids (elk, deer, moose, etc.) in Alberta.
- Producers are required to submit the heads of dead or slaughtered farmed cervids that are one year of age or older. The heads can be submitted to any AAFRD laboratory (Edmonton, Lethbridge, Airdrie or Fairview).
- Hunters can find information about where to submit heads from wild cervids from Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (ASRD) by visiting: <http://www3.gov.ab.ca/srd/fw/diseases/CWD/index.html>
- To date, only three animals (one farmed elk and two farmed white-tailed deer) have ever tested positive for the disease in Alberta.
- Up-to-date testing results are posted on a monthly basis on the CPV website at: <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/chiefvet>.

ALBERTA'S MASS FARM ANIMAL CARCASS DISPOSAL PLAN

- Alberta will soon have an approved plan for handling mass carcass disposal situations that result from any number of causes (e.g. floods, fires, weather, poisoning or disease)
- The Mass Farm Animal Carcass Disposal Plan was developed by a steering committee with representatives from all levels of government and industry.

- The plan outlines roles and responsibilities for carcass disposal. It also provides information about currently accepted methods of disposal.
- Once approved, the plan will be available on the CPV website. Municipal district and county offices in Alberta will also receive copies.

AVIAN INFLUENZA

- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) continues to threaten parts of Southeast Asia.
- Since late 2003, outbreaks of HPAI strain H5N1 have resulted in the death or culling of over 100 million birds in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.
- In March 2004, many Asian countries reported that the HPAI situation was contained. However, in June of 2004 new outbreaks in poultry were reported in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia (new), Thailand and Vietnam.
- In addition to poultry, HPAI has also affected humans. From December 30, 2003 to February 2, 2005, 55 humans in Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia were confirmed infected with the virus, resulting in 42 deaths.
- The CPV office continues to watch the HPAI situation in Southeast Asia. Information updates are posted on the CPV website at: <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/chiefvet>.

FINDING INFORMATION

Ropin' the Web (AAFRD)

www.agric.gov.ab.ca

Chief Provincial Veterinarian

www.agric.gov.ab.ca/chiefvet

Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)

www.inspection.gc.ca